

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 221178

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TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 221178

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, ET, UK, US

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON KAGNEW PHASE-DOWN AND DIEGO  
GARCIA IMPROVEMENTS

REF: ADDIS ABABA 10012

PER REQUEST REFTTEL, REPEATED IS TEXT OF STATE 200664  
DATED OCTOBER 10, 1973, SUBJECT AS ABOVE.

QUOTE

1. IN LIGHT LONDON PRESS STORY ON KAGNEW AND FACT THAT  
ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WISHES MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE, DOD INTENDS MAKE FOLLOWING LOW-KEYED RELEASE ON  
KAGNEW AT 11 A.M. EDT NEWS BRIEFING OCTOBER 11. ADDIS SHOULD  
INFORM IEG IT MAY MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT AT 4 P.M. LOCAL OCTOBER  
11 OR AT ANY TIME THEREAFTER. IEG EMBASSY INFORMED.

QUOTE: THE IEG AND THE USG HAVE MUTUALLY AGREED THAT THE  
U.S. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER AT ASMARA, ETHIOPIA - KAGNEW  
STATION - WILL BE PHASED DOWN AND THAT THE PHASING WILL BE  
COMPLETED BY 1 JULY 1974. A GROUP OF ABOUT 100 U.S. PER-  
SONNEL WILL HOWEVER CARRY ON RESIDUAL COMMUNICATIONS  
ACTIVITIES FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR BEYOND THAT.

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PAGE 02 STATE 221178

THE KAGNEW COMMUNICATIONS CENTER HAS BEEN OPERATED BY

THE U.S. ON THE BASIS OF AN AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE IEG AND THE USG IN 1953 AND EXTENDING THROUGH 1978.

THE INITIATION OF THE PHASE-DOWNPROCESS HAS BEEN IN RESPONSE TO THE WISHES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTAND ADVANCES IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY. UNQUOTE.

2. FOLLOWING Q AND A GUIDANCE HAS BEEN AGREED TO BY IEG AND MAY BE USED IN RESPONSE TO ANY INQUIRIES:

Q. WHEN WILL PHASE-DOWN BEGIN?

A. IMMEDIATELY.

Q. WHAT WILL BE IMPACT ON FLEET COMMUNICATIONS?

A. NEGLIGIBLE. ALTERNATIVE MEANS WILL BE EMPLOYED TO HANDLE FLEET COMMUNICATIONS.

Q. HOW MANY AMERICANS ARE CURRENTLY AT KAGNEW?

A. ABOUT 850, PLUS DEPENDENTS.

Q. HOW MANY ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES WILL BE AFFECTED?

A. EXACT NUMBER OF ETHIOPIANS FOR WHOM EMPLOYMENT WILL BE AVAILABLE IS STILL UNCLEAR, BUT MANY, OF COURSE, WILL BE RETAINED. U.S. OFFICIALS WILL COLLABORATE CLOSELY WITH ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT IN OUR MUTUAL DESIRE TO INSURE THAT TRANSITION FROM KAGNEW EMPLOYMENT WILL BE AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE.

Q. DOES THIS MEAN DIMINUTION OF USG INTEREST IN AND ASSISTANCE FOR ETHIOPIA?

A. NO. THE MUTUALLY AGREED PHASE-DOWN HAS BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT IN RESPONSE TO THE WISHES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND BY TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND U.S. BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS THAT HAVE LED TO CLOSING OF SCORES OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN U.S. AND ABROAD. IT IN NO WAY AFFECTS LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND US, NOR DOES IT IMPLY ANY DIMINUTION IN OUR ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA.

3. FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY STATEMENT HAS BEEN AGREED TO BY HMG AND MAY BE DRAWN ON IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES: EXISTING COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 221178

TO BE IMPROVED TO MEET ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. THIS IMPROVEMENT WILL IN NO WAY ALTER THE FUNCTION OF THE FACILITY AT DIEGO GARCIA (WHICH WILL REMAIN WITHIN THEBOUNDARIES OF THE EXISTING SITE) AND IS WITHIN THE TERMS OF THE EXISTING US/UK AGREEMENT OF 24 OCTOBER 1972. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN

CONSULTED AND HAS GIVEN ITS APPROVAL.

4. FYI. WE DO NOT YET KNOW NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL AMERICANS  
THAT MAY BE NEEDED AT DIEGO. END FYI

5. DEPT AND DOD WILL MAKE PRELIMINARY INDICATION OF OUR  
PLANS TO CONGRESS ON OCTOBER 10. IF HMG INTENDS INFORM  
ITS POSTS IN NON-ADDRESSEE COUNTRIES, LONDON REQUESTED  
GIVE ADDITIONAL NAMES TO DEPT. UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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